

CORTISONE THERAPY. By J. H. Glyn, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.Phys.Med. (Pp. x + 162. 21s.) London: Heinemann Medical Books, 1957.

THIS is a useful book, in which the place of cortisone and other steroid drugs in the treatment of the rheumatic diseases is reviewed. The book falls naturally into two parts. The first section consists of five chapters, and is concerned with the use of cortisone in rheumatoid arthritis. The second section consists of two chapters, the first of which describes the general use of cortisone in diseases other than rheumatoid arthritis, while the second discusses miscellaneous topics related to cortisone therapy such as the problems of drug production, therapeutic trials, mode of action of steroid drugs, and prospects for the future. Finally, there are several appendices, in one of which Dr. J. G. Bearn, of the Anatomy Department of the Middlesex Hospital, London, describes the anatomy and technique of intra-articular, and soft tissue injections of cortisone.

The best section is undoubtedly the first part, where Dr. Glyn describes the value, methods, indications, and limitations of cortisone therapy in rheumatoid arthritis. It is now ten years since Hench first employed cortisone in this condition, but there is as yet no unanimity among those best qualified to speak about its merits or demerits. Nevertheless, Dr. Glyn has tackled the problem bravely and with success, and has provided a helpful guide for those inexperienced in this new treatment. Much too of what he has to say is of value to the expert, and few will fail to profit from the balanced and comprehensive survey of this difficult field of modern therapeutics. Adequate stress has been laid on the dangers of indiscriminate use of cortisone in rheumatoid arthritis and the complications of treatment are fully discussed. The section describing the pre-treatment "briefing" of the patient is most practical, for all patients on cortisone must know something of the problems to be faced, and this knowledge helps to prevent undue disappointments later if success is not achieved.

The second section is less comprehensive than the first because of condensation, but it provides a good summary of the use of cortisone in a wide variety of diseases, including such collagen disorders as systemic lupus erythematosus, polyarteritis nodosa and dermatomyositis, and the allergic states.

This book will be of value to all physicians and surgeons anxious to bring themselves up to date with cortisone therapy.

D. A. D. M.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1955-1956. (Pp. vii + 270. 9s.) London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1957.

Most of this report is of necessity occupied by somewhat formal and factual details of the various research units, groups, and individuals supported by the Council. However, pages 10 to 56, entitled, "Some Aspects of Medical Research," present a review of current researches and trends in research, and will be of very general interest. Causative factors in cancer of the lung, poliomyelitis and whooping-cough vaccination, radiation and immunity and radiation and leukæmia, growth and renal function, abnormal hæmoglobins and microbial genetics are among subjects discussed, and indicate some fields where workers of the Council in this country have contributed to notable advances. In tropical areas filariasis and protein deficiency have been studied with support from the Council.

CARDIO-VASCULAR DISEASES. Section XVIII of *Excerpta Medica*. Volume 1, No. 1. Amsterdam: Excerpta Medica Foundation, 1957.

As a guide to further reading on subjects of special interest cardiologists will welcome this complete coverage of all aspects of the heart and circulatory system. Abstracts cover anatomy and physiology, pathology, all aspects of clinical medicine and even rehabilitation and social problems. Papers from all countries, including many from Russia, are included.